



USDA-NASS

Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

survey results summary issued twice monthly by the
Montana Agricultural Statistics Service

Issue: 04-07 (0279-0394) Released: April 1, 2004

HIGHLIGHTS:

Prospective Plantings
March 1 Grain Stocks
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Hogs & Pigs

March 2004 Planting Intentions

Montana **spring wheat** producers expect to seed 2.8 million acres in 2004 down 2 percent from last year. If realized, spring wheat intended seedings would be the lowest seeded acreage since 1993. **Winter wheat** seedings, at 1.85 million acres, are up 3 percent from last year and the largest acreage seeded since 1996. Winter wheat conditions at the end of March 2004 were better than a year ago and were rated 8 percent very poor, 12 percent poor, 33 percent fair, 40 percent good and 7 percent excellent. While conditions are better than a year ago, the lack of precipitation in many areas of the state is a still a major concern for the winter wheat producers. Producers are expecting to plant 620,000 acres of **durum wheat** this spring, down 3 percent from last year's highest planting since 1956. Adding the winter wheat seeded last fall to the other spring and durum wheat intended seedings shows 5.27 million acres of **all wheat** to be planted, down 20,000 acres from 2003.

Montana **barley** producers intend to plant an estimated 950,000 acres, down 14 percent from the previous year and the

lowest since 1953. The intended seeded acreage for **oats** is expected to be 130,000 acres, up 10,000 acres from the previous year. Growers intend to harvest 50,000 acres of the 2004 oat crop for grain, 5,000 acres more than a year ago. **Corn** growers intend to plant 70,000 acres, up 5,000 acres from last year. Farmers intend to plant 54,000 acres of **sugar beets**, up 4 percent from 2003. The area planted to **dry beans** is expected to be 14,000 acres, up 8 percent from last year. **Hay** growers are expected to harvest 2.6 million acres, which is up 6 percent from last year's figure.

In the United States, **all wheat** planted area is expected to total 59.5 million acres in 2004, down 4 percent from 2003. **Winter wheat** planted area for the 2004 crop is 43.4 million acres, down 3 percent from 2003. The 2004 **other spring wheat** planted acreage is estimated at 13.3 million, down 4 percent from last year. Of the total, about 12.7 million acres are Hard Red Spring wheat. Area planted to **durum wheat** is intended to total 2.76 million acres, down 5 percent from a year ago.

Growers in the United States intend to seed 4.68 million acres of **barley** for 2004, down 12 percent from last year. North Dakota's expected acreage, at 1.80 million, is also 12 percent below their 2003 planted area. Acres seeded and to be seeded to **oats** is expected to total 4.31 million acres down 6 percent from last year's planted area. Growers expect to harvest 2.07 million acres for grain, down 7 percent

from the 2003 harvested acreage of 2.22 million. Growers intend to plant 79.0 million acres of corn for all purposes in 2004, up fractionally from both 2002 and 2003. Area planted to **sugar beets** for the 2004 crop year is expected to total 1.36 million acres, slightly below the 2003 planted acreage. Prospective planting of **dry beans** in the U.S. totals 1.33 million acres, down 5 percent from last year and 31 percent below two years ago. Relatively low prices for the 2003 crop contribute to the expected reduction in planted acres.

U.S. producers expect to harvest 63.7 million acres of **all hay** in 2004, up 1 percent from last year. Adequate soil moisture in most of Texas, lower Mississippi Delta, and Great Lakes States enhanced producers expectations to harvest more hay. Extreme dry conditions have left soil moisture very short and water supplies are expected to be inadequate in the central Great Plains and central Rocky Mountains, which decreased harvest intentions.

The Montana 2004 prospective plantings and grain stocks estimates in this issue are the result of surveying approximately 2,000 Montana farmers in March. SPECIAL THANKS to those operators that were interviewed and responded to the survey.

Planted Acreage, 2002-2003 and Intended 2004 Montana and United States

	Montana				United States			
	2002	2003	2004	04/03	2002	2003	2004	04/03
	Thousand Acres			Pct	Thousand Acres			Pct
All Wheat	5,790	5,290	5,270	100	60,318	61,700	59,462	96
Winter Wheat	1,450	1,800	1,850	103	41,766	44,945	43,372	97
Durum Wheat	590	640	620	97	2,913	2,915	2,757	95
Other Spring Wheat	3,750	2,850	2,800	98	15,639	13,840	13,333	96
Barley	1,180	1,100	950	86	5,008	5,299	4,683	88
Oats	135	120	130	108	4,995	4,601	4,312	94
Corn	65	65	70	108	78,894	78,736	79,004	100
Sugar Beets	58.0	51.7	54.0	104	1,427.3	1,365.4	1,358.6	100
Dry Beans	26.9	13.0	14.0	108	1,929.7	1,406.1	1,333.0	95
All Hay Harvested	2,600	2,450	2,600	106	63,942	63,342	63,731	101

March 1, 2004 Grain Stocks

Stocks of **all wheat** in Montana on March 1, 2004 were 73.2 million bushels, up 1 percent from March 1, 2003. All wheat stocks stored on the farm amounted to 50.0 million bushels, up 2 percent from a year ago. All wheat stored off-farm amounted 23.2 million bushels, down 2 percent from a year ago. All wheat disappearance for the December-February 2004 quarter was up 18 percent from the same quarter last year to 47.1 million bushels, compared with 39.8 million a year ago.

Barley stocks in all positions on March 1, 2004 were 16.0 million bushels, up 6 percent from a year ago. Barley stored on-farms was 8.0 million bushels, down 6 percent from last year. Off-farm storage of barley was up 22 percent from a year ago at 8.0 million bushels. All barley disappearance for the December-February 2004 quarter was 10.1 million bushels, down 18 percent from a year ago. **Oats** stocks in all positions were estimated at 1.6 million bushels, down 7 percent from last year. On-farm stocks of oats were 1.5 million bushels down 6 percent from 1.6 million stored a year ago. Oats stored off-farm was down 13 percent from last year

to 100,000 bushels.

U.S. corn stocks in all positions on March 1, 2004 totaled 5.27 billion bushels, up 3 percent from March 1, 2003. Of the total stocks, 3.03 billion bushels are stored on farms, up 3 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 2.24 billion bushels, are up 2 percent from the previous year. The December 2003 - February 2004 indicated disappearance is 2.68 billion bushels, compared with 2.51 billion bushels during the same period last year.

All **wheat** stored in all positions on March 1, 2004 totaled 1.02 billion bushels for the U.S., up 12 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 258 million bushels, up 9 percent from last year. Off-farm stocks, at 761 million bushels, are up 14 percent from a year ago. The indicated December 2003 - February 2004 disappearance is 501 million bushels, up 21 percent from the same period a year earlier.

U.S. **durum wheat** stocks in all positions on March 1, 2004 totaled 44.0 million bushels, down 23 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 24.8 million bushels, are down 22 percent from March 1, 2003. Off-farm stocks totaled 19.2

million bushels, down 23 percent from a year ago. The indicated December 2003 - February 2004 disappearance of 22.9 million bushels is up 15 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Barley stocks in all positions on March 1, 2004 in the U.S. totaled 151 million bushels, up 23 percent from March 1, 2003. On-farm stocks are estimated at 51.7 million bushels, 41 percent above a year ago. Off-farm stocks, at 99.8 million bushels, are 15 percent above March 1, 2003. Indicated disappearance during the December 2003 - February 2004 quarter totaled 46.4 million bushels, down fractionally from the same period a year earlier.

U.S. **oats** stored in all positions on March 1, 2004 totaled 95.1 million bushels, 15 percent above the stocks on March 1, 2003. Of the total stocks on hand, 45.6 million bushels are stored on farms, 30 percent higher than a year ago. Off-farm stocks totaled 49.5 million bushels, 3 percent above a year earlier. Indicated disappearance during December 2003 - February 2004 totaled 24.2 million bushels, compared with 20.9 million bushels for the same period a year ago.

March 1 Grain Stocks

GRAIN and POSITION	MONTANA				UNITED STATES		
	Mar. 1, 2003	Dec. 1, 2003	Mar. 1, 2004	'04/'03	Mar. 1, 2003	Dec. 1, 2003*	Mar. 1, 2004
	Thousand Bushels		Percent		Thousand Bushels		
ALL WHEAT							
On Farms	49,000	94,000	50,000	102%	236,300	491,925	257,890
Off Farms 1/	23,680	26,310	23,200	98%	670,333	1,028,359	761,141
TOTAL	72,680	120,310	73,200	101%	906,633	1,520,284	1,019,031
DURUM WHEAT 2/							
On Farms	--	--	--	--	31,700	41,400	24,800
Off Farms 1/, 3/	--	--	--	--	25,149	25,569	19,247
TOTAL	--	--	--	--	56,849	66,969	44,047
BARLEY							
On Farms	8,500	18,000	8,000	94%	36,730	97,200	51,700
Off Farms 1/	6,520	8,090	7,970	122%	86,710	100,679	99,784
TOTAL	15,020	26,090	15,970	106%	123,440	197,879	151,484
OATS							
On Farms	1,600	1,700	1,500	94%	35,000	64,400	45,600
Off Farms 1/	115	110	100	87%	47,879	54,900	49,469
TOTAL	1,715	1,810	1,600	93%	82,879	119,300	95,069
CORN							
On Farms	--	--	--	--	2,940,000	5,286,000	3,030,000
Off Farms 1/	--	--	--	--	2,191,873	2,667,775	2,240,641
TOTAL	--	--	--	--	5,131,873	7,953,775	5,270,641

1/ Terminals, mills, interior elevators. 2/ Included in all wheat. 3/ Not included in order to avoid disclosing individual operations.

* Revised.

Agricultural Prices Received for February 2004

February 2004 full month crop prices were mostly higher compared with January 2004. Montana's winter wheat average price was \$3.60 per bushel, up \$0.06 from the previous month; spring wheat prices rose \$0.13 to \$3.93 per bushel; and durum wheat prices increased \$0.01 to \$3.99 per bushel. Feed barley prices rose \$0.08 from the previous month to \$2.11, and malt barley prices rose \$0.03 to \$3.43 per bushel.

The mid-March price for alfalfa hay was down \$2.00 to \$73.00 per ton and all other hay decreased \$1.00 to \$65.00 per ton. Mid-March grain prices were mostly higher than the previous month with winter wheat price averaging \$3.63 per bushel, spring wheat was \$4.00 per bushel, durum wheat was \$4.14 per bushel, feed barley was \$2.19 per bushel

and malt barley averaged \$3.30 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of February were mixed from the the previous month. Steer and heifer prices decreased \$1.90 to \$92.30 per cwt, while cows increased \$2.30 to \$47.60. The average price for calves decreased \$5.00 to \$112.00 per cwt. Sheep prices dropped \$4.90 to \$39.00 per cwt but lamb prices rose \$9.00 to a historic high of \$123.00 per cwt. Milk prices decreased \$1.30 per cwt from last month to \$13.00 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-March averaged \$94.30 per cwt.; cows averaged \$47.70 per cwt.; calves averaged \$113.00 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged \$13.70 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for February and changes from January were as follows: winter wheat was \$3.68, up \$0.02, spring

wheat was \$3.83, up \$0.17; durum wheat was \$4.08, up \$0.11; the all barley price was \$2.72, up \$0.01, and steer and heifer prices were \$82.30, down \$3.10 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-March winter wheat price was \$3.61 per bushel, spring wheat was \$3.81 per bushel, durum wheat was \$4.15 per bushel, all wheat was \$3.71 per bushel, malt barley was \$2.97 per bushel, feed barley was \$2.14 per bushel, and all barley was \$2.71. Steer and heifer prices were \$88.60 per cwt, cow prices were \$46.70, calves were \$114.00 per cwt., all hog prices were \$45.10 per cwt, and all egg prices were \$1.00 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in March at 122, based on 1990-92=100, is 6 points (5.2 percent) above the February Index. This is the highest index level since records began in 1910.

United States Index Summary

INDEX (1990-92=100)	February 2003	February 2004	March 2003	March 2004
Prices Received	99	99	116	122
Prices Paid, Interest, Taxes, & Farm Wage Rates 1/	128	128	130	131
Ratio 2/	77	77	89	93

1/ Prices paid indexes (1990-92=100) published monthly. 2/ Ratio of index of prices received by farmers to index of prices paid.

Montana Average Farm Prices Received

Commodity	U N I T	Monthly Average				Change From Previous		Mid-Month Average	
		Montana			U.S.	Month	Year	Montana	U.S.
		Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004	Feb. 2004	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2003	Mar. 15, 2004	Mar. 15, 2004
		Dollars							
Winter Wheat	Bu.	3.73	3.54	3.60	3.68	+0.06	-0.13	3.63	3.61
Durum Wheat	Bu.	4.75	3.98	3.99	4.08	+0.01	-0.76	4.14	4.15
Spring Wheat	Bu.	3.84	3.80	3.93	3.83	+0.13	+0.09	4.00	3.81
All Wheat	Bu.	3.93	3.72	3.81	3.77	+0.09	-0.12	3.88	3.71
Barley, All	Bu.	2.81	2.52	2.98	2.72	+0.46	+0.17	2.92	2.71
Feed Barley	Bu.	2.18	2.03	2.11	2.16	+0.08	-0.07	2.19	2.14
Malt Barley	Bu.	3.15	3.40	3.43	2.95	+0.03	+0.28	3.30	2.97
Oats	Bu.	1.83	N/A	1.66	1.58	N/A	-0.17	N/A	1.55
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	82.00	74.00	75.00	84.70	+1.00	-7.00	73.00	85.90
All Other Hay	Ton	73.00	67.00	66.00	69.90	-1.00	-7.00	65.00	70.90
All Hay Baled	Ton	81.00	72.00	73.00	79.90	+1.00	-8.00	71.00	81.80
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	80.00	94.20	92.30	82.30	-1.90	+12.30	94.30	88.60
Cows	Cwt	40.80	45.30	47.60	46.10	+2.30	+6.80	47.70	46.70
Beef Cattle 1/	Cwt	73.70	80.00	83.40	78.50	+3.40	+9.70	84.50	84.00
Calves	Cwt	93.50	117.00	112.00	111.00	-5.00	+18.50	113.00	114.00
Sheep 2/	Cwt	43.50	43.90	39.00	41.20	-4.90	-4.50	N/A	N/A
Lambs 2/	Cwt	103.00	114.00	123.00	107.00	+9.00	+20.00	N/A	N/A
All Milk	Cwt	11.40	14.30	13.00	13.60	-1.30	+1.60	13.70	14.70

1/ Composite of steers, heifers, and cows. 2/ Mid-month prices for sheep and lambs discontinued January 1996.

Weekly Crop-Weather Reports

The 2004 growing season is upon us, and with it begins the weekly Crop-Weather Report. Undoubtedly, this is one of the most useful reports for producers, agribusinesses, and market analysts. The report provides up-to-date conditions and progress of Montana's crops, as well as pertinent data on moisture supplies and weather information.

We will resume publication of the weekly reports April 5, 2004. These reports will continue through November 1 when the last 2004 weekly report will

be issued. At that time, monthly reports will resume.

U.S. Hog Inventory Up 2 Percent

U.S. inventory of all hogs and pigs on March 1, 2004, was 59.3 million head. This was 2 percent above March 1, 2003, but 2 percent below December 1, 2003.

Breeding inventory, at 5.92 million head, was down 2 percent from March 1, 2003, and down 1 percent from last quarter. Market hog inventory, at 53.4 million head, was 2 percent above last year, but 2 percent below last quarter.

The December 2003 - February 2004 U.S. pig crop, at 24.9 million head, was 2 percent more than 2003, and up slightly from 2002. Sows farrowing during this period totaled 2.81 million head, 2 percent above last year. The sows farrowed during this quarter represented 47 percent of the breeding herd. The average pigs saved per litter was 8.85 for the December 2003 - February 2004 period, compared to 8.81 last year. Pigs saved per litter by size of operation ranged from 7.60 for operations with 1-99 hogs to 9.00 for operations with more than 5,000 hogs and pigs.

COMING IN NEXT REPORTER

Montana's Rank	Specialty Crop County
Potato Stocks	Estimates
Quarterly Milk Production	Red Meat Production
Cattle on Feed	Egg Production

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